

What is claimed:

1. A programmable apparatus for providing a pricing hint to a first computer connected to a network comprising:

a second computer connected to the network;

5 a database in the memory of the second computer;

a program in the memory of the second computer for causing the first computer to display the pricing hint.

10 2. The programmable apparatus of claim 1 wherein the program determines the pricing hint based on historical data.

3. The programmable apparatus of claim 1 wherein the program determines the pricing hint based on current prices.

15 4. The programmable apparatus of claim 1 wherein the program provides the pricing hint based on market value.

5. A method for providing a pricing hint during an on-line auction comprising the steps of:

selecting an item on which to bid;

20 invoking a bid advisor program;

selecting a type of bid assistance; and

determining a pricing hint based on the type of bid assistance selected.

6. The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of placing a bid.

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7. The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of selecting a bid assistant.

8. The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of selecting bid assistance based upon historical pricing.

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9. The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of selecting bid assistance based upon market value.

10. The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of selecting bid assistance based upon current offering.

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11. A programmable apparatus for providing pricing hints during an on-line auction comprising:

programmable hardware comprising:

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a server computer;

a client computer;

a database;

a network connecting the server computer, the client computer, and the data base;

and

5 a bid advisor program installed on said server computer;

wherein the bid advisor program causes the client computer to display the pricing hint.

12. The programmable apparatus of claim 11 further comprising an historical pricing
program installed on said server computer.

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13. The programmable apparatus of claim 11 further comprising a current price pricing
program installed on said server computer.

14. The programmable apparatus of claim 11 further comprising a market value pricing
15 program installed on said server computer.

15. The programmable apparatus of claim 11 further comprising an historical pricing data
base in said server computer.

20 16. The programmable apparatus of claim 11 further comprising a current price data base

said server computer.

17. The programmable apparatus of claim 11 further comprising a market value data base in said computer.

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18. The programmable apparatus of claim 11 wherein said bid advisor program causes the client computer to access an historical price data base.

19. The programmable apparatus of claim 11 wherein said bid advisor program causes the client to access a current price data base.

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20. The programmable apparatus of claim 11 wherein said bid advisor program causes the client computer to access a market value data base.

21. A computer readable memory for causing a computer to provide a pricing hint during an on-line auction comprising:

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a computer readable storage medium;

a data base accessible to said computer;

a computer program stored in said storage medium;

wherein the storage medium, so configured by said computer program, causes the computer

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to display the pricing hint.

22. The computer readable memory of claim 21 further comprising a market value pricing program installed in said memory.

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23. The computer readable memory of claim 21 further comprising an historical price program installed in said memory.

24. The computer readable memory of claim 21 further comprising a current price program in said memory.

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25. The computer readable memory of claim 21 further comprising a market value data base in said memory.

26. The computer readable memory of claim 21 further comprising an historical pricing data base in said memory.

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27. The computer readable memory of claim 21 further comprising a current price data base in said memory.

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28. The computer readable memory of claim 21 further comprising a market value data base in said memory.

29. A programmable apparatus for providing pricing hints during an on-line auction

5 comprising:

programmable hardware comprising;

a server computer;

a client computer;

a database containing historical data, current offering data, and market value

10 data located in a memory of the server computer;

a web browser program installed on said client computer;

a bid advisor program installed on said client computer; and

a network connecting the server computer, the client computer, and the data

base;

15 wherein the bid advisor program causes the pricing hint to be displayed on said client computer.

30. The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the bid advisor program further comprises an search historical price program.

31. The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the bid advisor program further comprises a search current price program.

32. The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the bid advisor program further
5 comprises a compute market value program.

33. The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the data base further comprises an historical pricing data base.

10 34. The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the data base further comprises a current price data base.

35. The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the data base further comprises a market value data base.

15 36. The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the bid advisor program is included within the web browser program.